



The Northeast American Diocese of the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church

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**By the Grace of God,
Zachariah Mar Nicholovos,
Diocesan Metropolitan**

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Blessings to our Very Reverend Chor Episcopoi, Reverend Fathers, Reverend Deacons, and faithful of the Northeast American Diocese!

Dearly beloved,

We gather this year to celebrate the Feast of the Nativity of our Lord under difficult circumstances. In the midst of the pandemic, we may ask ourselves how we may find joy and peace which the Church promises through the birth of Jesus Christ?

The birth of our Lord reminds us that God has not forsaken His people. His profound presence penetrates the entire creation through His birth. The Sedro for the Matins of the Feast proclaims: "*Wonderful are You, for You were seen in the flesh for our salvation. Wonderful are You, for You dwelt in the cave while the heaven and earth are completely filled by Your presence.*" We confess that the Son of God, while seen as a child in a cave, filled the heavens and earth with His Almighty presence. This, beloved ones, provides us with hope.

God is not a mere spectator in our lives, but an active presence guiding us, directing our ways towards salvation. This provides us with a great sense of hope. God's presence has not left the world, He is present in the world and in our lives. When doubts, uncertainty and fear try to overcome us, let us remind ourselves that the One without bounds has limited Himself and entered into our world; The Word of God has taken flesh and dwelt among us (John 1:14). During this season of the Feast of our Lord, let us remember neither this pandemic, nor wars, famines, natural calamities, fears can prevent us from experiencing our Lord's presence.

May our Lord Jesus Christ, sustain you, strengthen you, and be every so close to you and your loved ones on this glorious Feast Day, and throughout the new year!

Yours in our Lord,



Zachariah Nicholovos, Metropolitan